

The Rush County Council met in regular session on August 27, 2014 at 8:00 a.m. with Gerald Mohr, Chairman, Warren Norris, Charles Smith, Janet Kile, Marvin Hedrick, Kevin Spilman, Mary Ann Beard, Auditor and Leigh Morning, County Attorney in attendance. Jerry Kent was absent.

Chairman, Gerald Mohr called the meeting to order.

Gerald Mohr called the Public Hearing of the 2015 Budget for Rush County and the Solid Waste District to order. Councilman Mohr asked for public input from the audience. Hearing none, the meeting was closed on a motion by Marvin Hedrick and seconded by Charles Smith.

Minutes of the July 9th meeting were approved on a motion by Warren Norris and seconded by Kevin Spilman.

JUDGE HILL

Superior Court Judge Brian Hill informed the board that he and Judge Northam will be attending their annual conference in French Lick during budget hearings. The Judge stated that there wasn't much change in the courts budget but he explained that after two security meetings it was determined that the request for courthouse security be placed in the sheriff's budget. The request calls for 2 or 3 part time special deputies at \$20 per hour. There is special training for these positions. Judge Hill also shared his support for Community Corrections. This program has drastically reduced the jail population and with the new criminal code for housing prisoners Community Corrections will be an invaluable tool.

HIGHWAY DEPT

Rush County Highway Superintendent, Jerry Sitton requested the Council to allow the advisement of an additional appropriation of \$80,000 in the Cum Bridge fund to replace Bridge # 265. A motion to allow the ad was made by Charles Smith and Warren Norris seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Sitton shared a list of railroad crossings containing several county roads west on U.S. Highway 52 that will be closed for crossing repair. The dates are staggered from September 2nd through September 11th and will be closed from 2-4 days per crossing.

Phase I of the U.S. Highway 52 project (2nd St.) is near completion. The state Department of Transportation will begin Phase II of this project after Labor Day. The county has not been informed if both lanes of traffic will be closed for Phase II.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Health Department requested a transfer of funds in the Local Health Department Trust in the amount of \$2,500 from Professional Services to Equipment. Kevin Spilman move to allow the transfer and Marvin Hedrick seconded the motion. Motion carried.

An additional appropriation for the Public Health Preparedness Grant in the amount of \$13,942 was allowed on a motion by Warren Norris. Charles Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CLERK

Debbie Richardson Clerk of the Courts will not be available for the budgets hearings due to her attendance at a Clerk's conference. Richardson submitted a letter to each councilman explaining the increases and decreases in the Clerk's, Election, and Voter Registration budgets. The Clerk was granted permission to replace employee Tonya Muckerheide who will be moving to the Superior Court.

PROSECUTOR

Kristi Marshall representing the Prosecutor's office informed the Council that the Investigator position held by Jim Meyer has been vacant since his death. The Prosecutor will now be filling this contracted position by Oct 1st.

ANDERSON TWP FIRE DEPARTMENT

Nick White was present to represent the Anderson Township Volunteer Fire Department. Mr. White asked that the council consider the requested increase for EMS services. White shared that many improvements have been made to the department including paid personnel on station. Becky Puckett added that the ambulance has been certified intermediate level and is now classified ALS.

SHERIFF

Sheriff Jeff Sherwood reported the inmate count at 41. The sewer line under the jail has received a temporary fix and is working at present. The Council was invited to the Merit Board meeting on September 3rd at 6:00 in the assembly room for the pension review.

The sheriff requested an additional appropriation in the K-9 Fund in the amount of \$4,000 to pay the expenses of the K-9 golf outing. Marvin Hedrick moved to approve and Janet Kile seconded the motion. Motion carried.

AUDITOR

Auditor, Mary Ann Beard stated that the supply appropriation in the Courthouse budget has been depleted once again. The board approved a transfer of \$2,000 from Building Maintenance & Supplies to Operating Supplies on a motion by Warren Norris and seconded by Charles Smith. Motion carried.

Beard then explained that two long time employees were retiring and that they are entitled to a payout of unused vacation days. A request to transfer \$2,749.88 from Examination of Records in the Commissioner's Budget to Vacation Pay Out was granted on a motion by Kevin Spilman and seconded by Janet Kile. Motion carried.

The Auditor presented the Certificate of County Tax Rates which reflects that Rush County's Local Income Tax Rate is 1.50%. Janet Kile moved for the required signatures to be placed on the certificate. Charles Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Pioneer/DuPont has submitted 2015 abatement forms that were due May 15th. The Auditor would like to confer with the Assessor due to additions in assessed values before the Council considers the request.

BUDGET 2015

Budget workbooks have been distributed to all council members. Calculations show that the 2015 budget needs to be cut by \$350,000. A request was sent to department heads to see if there were appropriations that could be reduced in the 2014 budget to off-set cuts to the 2015 budget. Due to the conservation nature of county employees, \$236,100 will be offered to the council at the budget hearings in an Appropriation Reduction Resolution.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Attorney Leigh Morning shared information on Flat Rock Wind. A company named APEX Wind Energy has acquired developmental rights from Nordex the former company that explored the possibility of constructing a wind farm. Details have not been revealed but Cory Murphy, the EDC director in Henry County is the lead contact. Attorney Morning is working on an economic development agreement, a road use agreement, and a de-commission agreement. Unpaid legal and financial consultant fees left by Nordex may be reimbursed by APEX Wind. Howard Kruger is the public relations representative for APEX.

The Rushville Public Library Board has passed a resolution to expand services and tax rates to all townships in the county not serviced by a library. It is now up to the County Commissioners to adopt a supporting resolution or require the library board to conduct a remonstrance process. The law does not require a public hearing for the action is conducted at a public meeting. The Commissioners have taken the request under advisement.

A Taco Bell franchise has received initial approval from the Area Plan Commission. Drainage issues at the adjoining Blue Ribbon Estates housing division are being addressed.

A reminder that the Jail Committee will meet upon adjournment was offered by Marvin Hedrick.

Motion to adjourn was initiated by Charles Smith. Kevin Spilman seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

/s/ Gerald Mohr
Gerald Mohr, Chairman

/s/ Warren Norris
Warren Norris

/s/ Charles Smith
Charles Smith

/s/ Janet Kile
Janet Kile

/s/ Marvin Hedrick
Marvin Hedrick

/s/ Kevin Spilman
Kevin Spilman

/s/ Jerry Kent
Jerry Kent

ATTEST:

/s/ Mary Ann Beard
Mary Ann Beard, Auditor

